

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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-----006722 080024Z /62

O 080005Z SEP 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3248
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 03501

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, MARR, XF, LE, IS
SUBJECT: RENEWAL OF UNIFIL MANDATE

REF: (A) USUN 3474, (B) JERUSALEM 2466

1. LEONARD AND HIRSCH MET WITH URQUHART AND AIME
SEPTEMBER 7 TO DISCUSS THE UPCOMING SECURITY COUNCIL
MEETING ON RENEWAL OF THE UNIFIL MANDATE AND THE
SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

2. LEONARD PROVIDED URQUHART WITH SUMMARY OF HIS SEPT 6
DISCUSSION WITH TUENI (REF A), INCLUDING LATTER'S
SUGGESTION THAT THE COUNCIL MEET EARLY NEXT WEEK AND
OUR NEGATIVE REACTION TO THIS IDEA. URQUHART AGREED
WITH US ON UNDESIRABILITY OF COUNCIL MEETING NEXT WEEK,
AND SAID THAT WALDHEIM WANTS TO AVOID ANY CONTROVERSIAL
DISCUSSION OF MIDDLE EAST ISSUES AT THE UN DURING THE
OPENING PHASE OF THE CAMP DAVID TALKS. HIS REPORT ON
UNIFIL PROBABLY WILL BE CIRCULATED TO COUNCIL MEMBERS
ON SEPT 12, ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE THEN.
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3. AFTER QUICKLY REVIEWING THE SERIES OF IDF/UNIFIL
MEETINGS AND NON-MEETINGS SINCE WEIZMAN'S AUGUST 30
SESSION WITH SIILASVUO (WHICH AIME SAID LASTED EXACTLY
3 1/2 MINUTES), URQUHART SAID ISRAELI OBJECTIVES IN
PROPOSING STEPS TO COOPERATE WITH UNIFIL HAD BEEN TWOFOLD:

A) TO OBTAIN A POSITIVE REACTION FROM THE US AND THE UN FOR ITS ROLE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON ON THE EVE OF CAMP DAVID; AND B) TO TRY TO OBTAIN SOME FORM OF DE FACTO UN RECOGNITION OF HADDAD AND SHIDIAC. THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, HOWEVER, CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED ISRAELIS BASICALLY ARE SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION IN WHICH THEY CONTROL THE AREA THROUGH THE PROXY OF THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA.

4. URQUHART CONTINUED THAT THE SYG'S REPORT ON UNIFIL WILL PROVIDE AN OBJECTIVE SUMMARY OF EVENTS AS WELL AS A FEW OBSERVATIONS BY THE SYG. IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS MEANS THAT THE REPORT WILL BE CRITICAL OF ISRAEL AND CHRISTIAN MILITIA. LEONARD URGED URQUHART TO MEET WITH ISRAELI PERMREP BLUM BEFORE CIRCULATION OF SYG'S REPORT TO BE CERTAIN ISRAELI'S UNDERSTAND WHAT LIES AHEAD. URQUHART WAS RELUCTANT, SAYING HE HAD DISCUSSED REPORT WITH CAHANA LAST WEEK, BUT THEN AGREED TO ARRANGE NEW MEETING.

5. IN FURTHER DISCUSSION OF ISRAELI ROLE, URQUHART AND AIME REITERATED VIEW THAT WEIZMAN, EITAN AND BENGAL ARE ON THE SAME WAVE LENGTH. THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED OF SYRIA'S INTENTION TO DOMINATE LEBANON. FROM THAT CONVICTION, THEY ARGUE THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR IDF TO ACQUIESCE IN RETURN OF LEBANESE ARMY TO THE

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SOUTH -- WHICH THEY VIEW AS SYRIAN PLOT CITING TESTIMONY OF A LEBANESE ARMY OFFICER TO THAT EFFECT OR TO CEASE ITS SUPPORT OF THE CHRISTIANS. AIME RECALLED THAT ON JUNE 12 BENGAL, IN FINALIZING THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, SAID THAT ONLY ONE POINT WAS MISSING IN THE AGREEMENT: THE IDF WOULD RETURN ANY TIME IT FELT IT WAS NECESSARY. AT HIS LAST MEETING WITH AIME A FEW DAYS AGO, BENGAL SAID HALF JOKINGLY THAT THE NEXT DISCUSSION WITH IDF ON UNIFIL COULD TAKE PLACE IN BEIRUT.

6. AS REGARDS THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA, AIME EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT HADDAD MIGHT DECLARE THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE ENCLAVES ONE DAY, CONFRONTING ALL OF US WITH A NEW FAIT ACCOMPLI, PRESAGING PARTITION OF THE COUNTRY.

7. URQUHART AND AIME ALSO REITERATED THEIR VIEW THAT THE GOL WANTED TO HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH SOUTHERN LEBANON. THEY BELIEVE GOL HAS LOST ALL INTEREST IN SENDING A BATTALION SOUTH, BEING TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE SITUATION IN BEIRUT AND THE NORTH. ERSKINE SEES VIRTUALLY NO VALUE IN MEETINGS WITH GOL IN BEIRUT. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT UNIFIL IS QUITE FED UP WITH THE

GOL AND VIEWS IT AS A PASSIVE, HELPLESS, FACTOR IN THE STRUGGLE FOR SOUTHERN LEBANON.

8. URQUHART CONTINUES TO ANTICIPATE NO DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING RENEWAL OF THE UNIFIL MANDATE, DESPITE THE LIKELIHOOD OF A HEATED DEBATE IN THE COUNCIL. GAZIT, HE SAID, HAD GIVEN UNIFIL THE SAME ASSESSMENT. THE ISRAELIS, HE FEELS, THUS ARE NOT VERY CONCERNED ABOUT COMING UNDER ATTACK IN THE COUNCIL. LEONARD SAID WE

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COULD EXPECT THAT THEY WOULD SEEK TO SHIFT FOCUS FROM THEIR ROLE IN SOUTH LEBANON TO THE SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN THREATS TO LEBANON.

9. IN ADDITION TO URQUHART'S PLAN TO MEET WITH BLUM OR CAHANA, WE ALSO INTEND TO REVIEW THE SITUATION WITH THE ISRAELI MISSION PRIOR TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE SYG'S REPORT. YOUNG

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